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Monday, 08 Nov 2010

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200 Years of Mission

Building a New Community Around the World and at Home

by Jan Aerie & Kathy Clark

This year, the United Church of Christ is celebrating the 200th Anniversary of Global Missions. As part of the commemoration, Conference Ministers from throughout the UCC have been invited to travel to various mission sites around the world to see our mission in action. In September 2010, Associate Conference Minister Kathy Clark travelled to Zambia and South Africa where, among others, she met with several partners working in Theological Education by Extension, programs of lay theology begun by Rev. Dick Sales more than 30 years ago. Rev. Sales founded the Theology Among the People (TAP) program based on these models. In March 2011, Conference Minister Tim Downs will travel to China and the Philippines. We are blessed in the Southeast Conference to have many retired missionaries continuing to share their stories and witness among us.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the first North American



UCC News

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Headlines from the United Church of Christ

[Unified Governance receives approval of UCC boards, Executive Council](#)

Following a year of deliberation, including discernment and dialog from congregations, Conferences and interest groups, a "Proposal for Unified Governance of the National Setting of the United Church of Christ" was delivered by the Unified Governance (UGov) Working Group and has received approval to proceed from the UCC's Executive Council and the boards of the four Covenanted Ministries.



Southeast Conference FAQ's

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foreign mission organization, was established by the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts on June 29, 1810 and held its first meeting around a small table in the parlor of Rev. Noah Porter's home in Farmington, CT on September 5, 1810.

They have gone into all areas of the world witnessing the Good News through many projects in evangelism, education, and healing. For what larger purpose has God led us thus far?

Within two years of the genesis of the ABCFM, missionaries were dispatched to India, where they established the first mission stations, and soon to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Other early mission efforts were directed to American Indian populations beginning in 1817. Mission expanded to the Near east (now called the Middle East) and to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) in 1819, then China by 1831, Africa in 1834 and Japan by 1869. This period of expansion of mission came largely during the tenure of Rufus Anderson, who served as Secretary of the Board from 1832 – 1866. Anderson contributed to the theory and practice of foreign mission during that time and is best known for articulating the "three-self formula". Anderson defined the goal of mission as the creation of self-supporting, self-

governing and self-propagating indigenous churches.*

Click on the slide show below and review some wonderful photos of Zambia and South Africa. Enjoy the beauty of the landscape, the history and its people.

Africa 2010 September 2010 Africa 2010

September 2010

The day of the ordination and commissioning of the first missionaries who were to go overseas from the U.S. was fiercely cold; yet the Tabernacle Church in Salem, Massachusetts, was crowded. Visitors came from far and near on February 6th, 1812, to see the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions give the solemn charge to Adoniram Judson, Samuel Newell, Samuel Nott, Jr., Gordon Hall, and Luther Rice. Students from Andover Seminary and Phillips Academy, Andover, walked to and from Salem (better than fifty miles round trip) to attend the service.

The proceedings were followed with almost breathless interest. Here were talented and trained young men, before whom life opened so promisingly, committing themselves to the hazards of a foreign mission! The eyes of the congregation were often turned on the faces of two young women who were present - one Mr. Judson's bride of a day, and the other the promised wife of Newell. Later, the record of her faith during her short life was to become a mighty incentive to the new missionary movement.

That same evening Nott, Hall, and Rice left for Philadelphia supposing they had just time to catch the Harmony before she sailed. The Judsons and Newells remained in Salem awaiting the Caravan, a brigantine which was getting ready to leave for Calcutta. Delays occurred in the sailings of both vessels, trying the spirits of the eager missionaries but bringing relief to the Board's officers who were seeing the treasury filling fast. When it was known that the Board not merely proposed to send out missionaries but that these young people were embarking, gifts flowed in from all quarters. Within three weeks of the decision to send missionaries in faith, more than \$6000 was collected. By the time the Caravan sailed it was possible to furnish the young people with their full outfits and a year's salary in advance. Considering the disturbed conditions to follow because of war, and the difficulty in transporting money, this was indeed fortunate. In a similar way, offerings of friends in the neighborhood of Philadelphia fully equipped those who sailed on the Harmony.

On February 19th, the Caravan sailed out of Salem, carrying the Judsons and Newells; the Harmony, with Mr. and Mrs. Nott, and Hall and Rice, finally got away from the Delaware Cape on the 24th. Thus was launched. all those years ago. a



"Dr. Dick Sales has had the greatest impact on the church in Zambia than any other individual I know." These words came spontaneously to me in conversation with Pastor Kondolo of Kitwe, Zambia, one of the hosts on my journey through Zambia and South Africa earlier

this year. I heard similar sentiments in every setting that I visited. One of my joys in taking this trip was the opportunity to visit with directors of Theological Education by Extension (TEE), sibling groups to our own Theology Among the People (TAP) program in the Southeast Conference.

Rev. Dr. Dick Sales, retired missionary and active member of the UCC who currently lives in Birmingham, Alabama with his wife Nancy, spent much of his career strengthening the church through theological education for lay and ordained leaders in Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and, upon his "first" retirement, throughout the Southeast Conference. Literally thousands of pastors and lay men and women have been equipped for ministries within the church and the world because of their involvement in programs such as TAP and TEE.

What a blessing it was to visit the land that he loves so much and to meet people who love and honor him for his long lasting ministry. TEE programs begun by Dr. Sales continue to thrive and to grow throughout Southern Africa, as well as here in the SEC.

from the Southern Baptists on the 21st. This has remained, all these years ago, a far, heroic enterprise. Who can conceive of the scope, character and power of service of the nearly 5000 men and women who have followed these eight? They have gone into all areas of the world witnessing the Good News through many



projects in evangelism, education, and healing. For what larger purpose has God led us thus far? Link here to read a list of **Notable Appearances of the ABCFM in U.S. and World History.**

Over the years other organizations became part of the corporation (notably the Evangelical and Reformed mission and service agencies, women's mission boards, etc.). Today the same corporation exists with a new name which changed in 1961 to United Church Board for World Ministries and again in 1999 to Wider Church Ministries (a covenanted ministry of the United Church of Christ). There is much in our history and our current ministry for which we celebrate and give thanks to God. There is also much that we can learn from past mistakes (visible perhaps only in hindsight) and some about which we can confess and seek forgiveness. Join us in commemorating this anniversary throughout 2010 – 2012.

For more information and resources [link here](#).

Read more - **Reflections of a Global Ministries Pilgrim: A Feast for the Soul.** **Kathy Clark**, recently returned from a Global Ministries tour of Zambia and South Africa, shares from her journal. [Link here to read the journal entries.](#)

***David M. Stowe, Year 175: A Brief History of the United Church Board for World Ministries.** (New York: UCBWM, 1948).
** Based upon **"The History of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission"**
Jan Aerie is the Executive for Mission Education and Interpretation in Wider Church and Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

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EVENTS CALENDAR

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November 2010

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Steps to Planting a New Church

News

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